

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Fall 2008

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to another exciting new year at Wake Forest! Over the summer the TLC underwent a series of fundamental changes, not least of which is that it now operates under the umbrella of the Provost's Office.

In May we held a retreat with Provost Jill Tiefenthaler and Associate Provost Michele Gillespie. Moreover, the TLC's Advisory Board has expanded to include representatives from the Graduate and Professional Schools along with those from Calloway and the College.

**Sally Barbour**, *Romance Languages*

**Peter Brunette**, *Art/Communication*

**Diane Lipsett**, *Divinity School*

**Leah McCoy**, *Education*

**Gordon McCray**, *Calloway*

**Randall G. Rogan**, *Associate Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences/Communication*

**Charley Rose**, *Law School*

**Gary Shoemith**, *Babcock*

**Wayne Silver**, *Biology*

**Helga Welsh**, *Political Science*

We will also have representatives from Division I of the College and the Medical School in the near future. During the course of the year, the Advisory Board and I will work together to devise new programs and expand services provided by the TLC. We continue our efforts to redesign the web-site as well as to initiate programs to support Graduate and Professional students and make available to faculty resources that will enable them to hone their skills as teachers and scholars.

As you will see in this newsletter, the TLC has arranged for some 17 individuals from throughout the university to host nine exciting panels this semester. The presenters and their topics vary in subject and discipline: from teaching about sustainability

to mentoring graduate and professional students, from what to do in cases of dire emergencies to classroom management, from interdisciplinary programs to undergraduate research, and from first year seminars to the consequences and implications of the new admissions policy. In addition, we will hold the always popular "Wine and Cheese Social" in November and we will continue to offer monthly faculty appreciation coffee and refreshments. We look forward to seeing you at these events.

The TLC also will be sponsoring a special 10th year anniversary reception in honor of all our ACE Fellows on Thursday, September 11, 3-4:30, in Benson. The provost will speak about the importance of the work of the ACE Fellows at that time. Please mark your calendars. This represents a wonderful opportunity to share service learning experiences and to find out about service learning opportunities as a prospective ACE Fellow.

This year's application for proposing a First Year Seminar is available at the TLC home page. The link will take you to supporting materials, like guidelines for submitting a proposal, a list of this year's seminars, and sample syllabi.

Special mention must be made to Gillian Overing (English) and Ulrike Wiethaus (Humanities), co-recipients of the 2007-2008 Teaching Innovation Award. We offer our congratulations!

Please feel free to drop by and visit us anytime! We welcome suggestions about future events and we especially want to hear from those of you who have published or presented on any aspect to teaching. Each of us at the Teaching and Learning Center wish you a terrific semester!

Sincerely,

**Jeffrey D. Lerner**

*History*

*Director, Teaching and Learning Center*

## LEARNING BY DOING: ASSESSING THE VALUE OF A STUDENT-BUILT WIKI

*Stephanie Pellet*

*Assistant Professor of French / Romance Languages*

Research on using internet-based tools for foreign language classrooms argues that students learn and retain material more easily if they directly interact with it, and are made responsible for their learning. In the process, they also become more engaged and fulfilled. During the spring 2008 semester, I taught FR 345 "Langage et Société," an introduction to French sociolinguistics, to a group of twelve advanced students of French. My objective was to combine technology-enhanced learning with the principles of active and collaborative learning. The core tool to meeting that objective was the Wiki, essentially, a web page that is collaboratively constructed, like the well-known Wikipedia. Building a Wiki requires no computer knowledge beyond general skills such as Microsoft Word. And it proved to be a successful experience for students and instructor alike.

### COURSE STRUCTURE AND KEY PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPTS

The course and syllabus were entirely designed around collaborative learning (in and out of the classroom) and cognitively active learning (Mayer, 2004) through content-sharing within small groups ("learning by teaching," Martin and Oebel, 2007), so that students become "experts" (*Scaffolding Theory*, Vygostky, 1934/1986). In class, students typically worked within four groups of three: each group member reported to the others about one of the three (somewhat overlapping) readings assigned for the day. PowerPoint-based, 15 minute lectures sometimes opened the hour to introduce the topic, the terminology, and some essential concepts. The class usually ended with a general discussion of the readings. In-class collaborative learning and content-sharing also occurred through student presentations within their groups. For instance, students gave a PowerPoint presentation on a chosen French

dialect to their group. These activities quickly led to strongly cohesive groups. To reinforce the concept of collaborative learning, 15% of the grade was set apart for “collective homework,” while the same percentage was set apart for “individual homework.” The grade breakdown also included two exams (35%), a final paper (15%), participation (5%), and finally, the class project (15%), i.e., the Wiki. Blackboard was also extensively used to share information such as lecture notes and syllabus updates. All readings, class discussions, and content development were in French.

#### WIKI IMPLEMENTATION

On the first day of class, the announcement of a student-built Wiki project was met with blank stares. Students were unsure what it meant, or what it involved. After I met with staff from Instructional Technology to discuss the best format for the class project, I set aside a class meeting for Lauren Pressley, Instructional Design Librarian at Wake Forest, to explain to the students how to create content on the Wiki. For the instructor, setting up a Wiki means anticipating pitfalls through carefully planning its structure and clearly defining and stating its pedagogical objectives. I provided a structure for the Wiki through a suggested outline which closely followed the syllabus. The Wiki outline was presented in class about 10 days prior to a posting due date, and made available on Blackboard. Since there were four groups, the outline comprised four main headings (e.g., “what is sociolinguistics?”) with related sub-topics (e.g., sociolinguistics vs. sociology of language). The four groups briefly negotiated in class which group was responsible for which heading. Students were to write content in their own words (no paraphrase or copy-paste), a crucial aspect of building the Wiki. The Wiki outline also explicitly stated (in French) the objective of the Wiki project, that is to lead students to formulate their knowledge. To foster a sense of academic honesty, and apply academic research standards, students were asked to cite their sources. Students composed five postings throughout the semester (interspersed with class presentations, exams, and holidays). My sole contribution to the Wiki was a greeting, stating its objective and presenting the authors. I also wanted to fend off visitors’ possible negative reactions to the students’ imperfect French:

the primary goal of the course was to learn about French sociolinguistics using French.

#### OUTCOMES

While students’ feedback on the Wiki project indicated they identified different beneficial aspects to the Wiki project, students all pointed out what they clearly viewed as the main concrete payoff of the Wiki: review material for tests. The natural concern for “the bottom line” of taking a course, the grade, should not underscore what each individual took out of the Wiki experience, namely: small group interaction outside class to sort concepts both in terms of meaning and in terms of relative importance; development of critical and analytical skills as the groups had to choose worthwhile information to post; sense of connecting with francophones and francophiles throughout the world; sense of taking ownership of new technology; sense of class community through collaborative effort; and, I hope, enjoyment.

The collaborative setting enabled students to take ownership of the course in every way: they came to class expecting to be actively engaged with the material, to be teachers just as much as learners, and to be the engine of the classroom, instead of the instructor. While I had to adjust my expectations about how (much) students would accomplish with the Wiki (a cohesive body of knowledge, with cross-referencing internal links), I observed visible progress throughout the successive postings both in quantity and in quality. When I did a Google search in class for “langage et societe,” their reaction of awe to finding their Wiki fourth-listed was telling: the Wiki was the real thing, they discovered. The feeling of doing something ‘authentic’ and ‘real’ no doubt played a big part in making this class successful. But of no less important was the positive energy and attitude this group brought to class. Please feel free to check out our site at [http://wiki.zsr.wfu.edu/langagesociete/!](http://wiki.zsr.wfu.edu/langagesociete/)

Bonwell, C.C., and J. A. Eison. 1991. *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1. Washington, D.C.: George Washington University Clearinghouse on Higher Education.

Mayer, R. 2004. *Should there be a three-strikes rule against pure discovery learning? The case for guided methods of instruction*. *American Psychologist* 59 (1): 14-19.

Martin, J-P and Oebel, G. 2007. *Lernen durch Lehren: Paradigmenwechsel in der Didaktik?* *Deutschunterricht in Japan*, 12: 4-21 (Zeitschrift des Japanischen Lehrerverbandes)

Vygostky, L. 1986. *Tought and Language*. Ed. Alex Kozulin. Cambridge: MIT Press.

## TLC EVENTS Fall 2008

*If you do not already receive e-mail reminders about TLC programs and would like to, please e-mail your request to [tlc@wfu.edu](mailto:tlc@wfu.edu). All programs take place in the TLC (Room 330, ZSR Library) unless otherwise indicated. If you are unable to attend an event but would like any handouts prepared by our hosts, contact the TLC Coordinator at [tlc@wfu.edu](mailto:tlc@wfu.edu).*

## SEPTEMBER EVENTS

### RESPONDING TO CAMPUS EMERGENCIES

**Date:** Monday, September 8, 2008

**Time:** 3:00 P.M.

**Location:** Room 401B, Benson Center

**Hosts:** Regina Lawson (Campus Police Department) and Ken Zick (Vice President)

Campus emergency preparedness has been on minds of many people in the wake of tragedies at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University. The Teaching and Learning Center will host a program led by University Police Chief Regina Lawson and Vice-President Ken Zick on the subject, “Responding to Campus Emergencies,” on Monday, September 8, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 401B of the Benson University Center. The program will address University crisis management planning, crisis communications, campus safety initiatives, and practical advice for responding to particular emergencies. This program is open to all faculty, staff, and students. RSVP is not required.

### ACE FELLOWS PROGRAM 10TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION

**Date:** Thursday, September 11, 2008

**Time:** 3:00-4:30 P.M.

**Location:** Benson 4th Floor Gallery (outside room 401)

Can you believe a total of fifty-five faculty have participated in the ACE Fellows Program since its inception in 1998! The

ACE Fellows Program has had an important influence on the development of our college curriculum across that decade, and has provided critical opportunities for our students to connect academic learning with community understanding and experience. We are pleased to announce that the TLC will sponsor a special 10th year anniversary reception in honor of all our ACE Fellows. This event represents a wonderful opportunity to share service learning experiences, generate interest in service learning, and convey that excitement to prospective ACE Fellows and the whole campus. All faculty are invited, specially prospective ACE Fellows. Please RSVP to <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Monday, September 8.

### WAKE FOREST'S NEW POLICY REGARDING ACT/SAT SCORES

**Date:** Monday, September 15, 2008  
**Time:** 12:00 P.M.

**Location:** Benson 344F  
**Host:** Joseph Soares (Sociology)

Beginning with the freshman class of 2009, Wake Forest University will make college entrance examinations optional for admission. Joseph Soares will lead a faculty session on this topic that will include how to address student questions about the new policy. We invite all faculty to join us to contribute opinions, concerns, and prior experiences with similar policies. Please RSVP to <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, September 10, to receive a boxed lunch courtesy of the TLC, and be sure to specify your lunch choice in the appropriate selection box. We extend a special welcome to new faculty to join our programs.

### TEACHING SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP

**Date:** Wednesday, September 24, 2008  
**Time:** 12:00 P.M.

**Location:** Benson 344F  
**Hosts:** Robert Browne (*Biology*), Dilip Kondepudi (*Chemistry*), Emily Wakild (*History*)

Sustainability has become quite the buzzword—but how could it influence the way you teach? Join us for an open conversation about incorporating sustainability into the classroom and into our daily practices. Strategies include fostering environmental awareness, emphasizing the intertwined relationships between humans

and the environment, and sustainability activities on campus and beyond. This session will begin with some ideas from an interdisciplinary panel consisting of Robert Browne, Environmental Program and Biology; Dilip Kondepudi, Chemistry; and Emily Wakild, History. There will then be ample time for discussion. Please RSVP to <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Friday, September 19 to receive a boxed lunch, and be sure to select a lunch option. We extend a special invitation to our new faculty.

## OCTOBER EVENTS

### RESPONDING TO CAMPUS EMERGENCIES

**Date:** Wednesday, October 8, 2008  
**Time:** 12:00 P.M.

**Location:** Pugh Auditorium, Benson Center  
**Hosts:** Regina Lawson (*Campus Police Department*) and Ken Zick (*Vice President*)

Campus emergency preparedness has been on minds of many people in the wake of tragedies at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University. The Teaching and Learning Center will host a program led by University Police Chief Regina Lawson and Vice-President Ken Zick on the subject, "Responding to Campus Emergencies," on Wednesday, October 8, at 12-1 p.m. in Pugh Auditorium of the Benson University Center. The program will address University crisis management planning, crisis communications, campus safety initiatives, and practical advice for responding to particular emergencies. This program is open to all faculty, staff, and students. RSVP is not required.

### OPEN FORUM ON FIRST-YEAR SEMINARS

**Date:** Tuesday, October 14, 2008  
**Time:** 11:00 A.M.

**Location:** ZSR Library, Room 204  
**Hosts:** Bernadine Barnes (*Art*) and Jennifer Burg (*Computer Science*)

The FYS discussions have become one of the most popular programs offered by the TLC. Join us for an opportunity to obtain advice from experienced FYS faculty, offer suggestions for improving students' FYS experience, and express concerns about your current and future FYS classes. You

do not have to be currently teaching, or scheduled to teach, a First-Year Seminar to attend! Please RSVP to <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Thursday, October 9, to receive a boxed lunch courtesy of the TLC, and be sure to specify your lunch choice in the appropriate selection box. We extend a special welcome to new faculty to join our programs.

### MENTORING GRADUATE STUDENTS

**Date:** Thursday, October 30, 2008  
**Time:** 3:00 P.M.

**Location:** ZSR Library, Room 204  
**Hosts:** Sam Gladding (*Counseling*), Dan Johnson (*Biology*), Randy Rogan (*Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Communication*)

The goal of graduate education is to train the next generation of thinkers, teachers, and researchers within a given discipline. The individual student is transformed through a combination of coursework, individual research activities, and mentoring by faculty who share their interests. By its very nature, mentoring must be tailored to the individual student. That said, certain methods and strategies have proven successful time and again. Faculty who have served as long-time mentors in three very different graduate programs (Communication, Counseling, and Biology) will each briefly describe their mentoring philosophy and approach to students. This will be followed by a panel discussion of questions from the audience. Light refreshments will be available. Please RSVP to <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Monday, October 27.

## NOVEMBER EVENTS

### YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO A "MEET AND GREET" RECEPTION

**Date:** Thursday, November 6, 2008  
**Time:** 2-4:00 P.M.

**Location:** Teaching and Learning Center, Room 330, ZSR Library

We invite you to join your Wake Forest colleagues for an informal pre-holiday gathering. Enjoy an assortment of delicious hors d'oeuvres and wines, meet new faculty members—our special guests for the event—and greet old friends. Please

feel free to arrive and depart as your schedule dictates. RSVP not required. By invitation only, open to Wake Forest faculty and administrators.

## URECA AT WFU

**Date:** Tuesday, November 11, 2008

**Time:** 11:00 A.M.

**Location:** Reynolda Hall, The Little Mag Room

**Host:** Harry Titus (Art)

One of the Centers established this year by Provost Tiefenthaler is the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Center (URECA). The mission of this Center is to support and to highlight the activities of college undergraduates as they pursue their intellectual interests. URECA coordinates results from several research programs on campus. The Center's steering committee realizes that these programs are imperfectly understood across campus. Join your colleagues to learn more about these programs and how faculty and students might profit from them. Dr. Titus will welcome your comments and questions! Please RSVP to <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, November 5, to receive a boxed lunch courtesy of the TLC, and be sure to specify your lunch choice in the appropriate selection box. We extend a special welcome to new faculty to join our programs.

## NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES

**Date:** Thursday, November 20, 2008

**Time:** 3:00 P.M.

**Location:** ZSR Library, Room 204

**Hosts:** Charles Rose (Law), Roy Hantgan (School of Medicine), Jill Crainshaw (Divinity School)

*Additional information about this event will be available soon on the TLC website.*

## WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER

The Teaching and Learning Center was established in 1997 with a dual purpose: meeting faculty-identified needs for teaching support and promoting dialogue about teaching. Faculty are encouraged to fill out a Faculty

Information Form available from the Center designed to help us target specific needs and concerns which are then the topics for brown bag lunch discussion and workshops throughout the academic year.

The Teaching and Learning Center also offers a number of voluntary and confidential evaluation services outside the traditional departmental evaluation process. These have included mid-term evaluations, videotaping, peer class visitations, and a faculty mentoring program.

To learn more about the Teaching and Learning Center, and/or to discuss the programs and services the TLC offers, please contact the TLC Director Jeff Lerner at Ext. 4559 [lernerjd@wfu.edu](mailto:lernerjd@wfu.edu) or the TLC Coordinator at Ext. 4587 [tlc@wfu.edu](mailto:tlc@wfu.edu). The Teaching and Learning Center is open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday until 5:00 P.M., Wednesday until 3:00 P.M., and Friday until 12:00 P.M. The Director will hold office hours from 8:30 – 9:30 A.M., Tuesday and Wednesday. The Center is located in room 330, Z. Smith Reynolds Library.

The TLC Advisory Committee is elected annually. Committee members for the 2008-2009 academic year are: Sarah (Sally) E. Barbour, Romance Languages; Peter Brunette, Art; Barbara Diane (Diane) Lipsett, Divinity School; Leah McCoy, Education; Gordon McCray, Calloway; Charley Rose, Law School; Gary Shoesmith, Babcock; Wayne Silver, Biology; Helga Welsh, Political Science; and Randall Rogan, Graduate School.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLASSROOM VISITS AND MENTORING

If you would like to get feedback on your teaching from one of your peers, there are now several ways to do so.

### PEER CLASSROOM VISITS

Inspired by a suggestion by Alyssa Lonner in the Department of German and Russian, the Teaching and Learning Center coordinates voluntary faculty classroom visits. These are friendly visits, meant to help newer faculty members without pressure; generally the observer will be a colleague of similar rank, but from a different department. Unlike the classroom visits that your department may require as part of your yearly review, feedback will be very informal, as agreed upon by the

participants.

If you would like to have a faculty member from another department visit your class, or if you would like to visit someone else's class, please send an e-mail to the TLC Coordinator at [tlc@wfu.edu](mailto:tlc@wfu.edu).

## MID-TERM EVALUATIONS AND VIDEOTAPING

If you prefer a more structured evaluation of a particular class, the TLC can arrange a mid-term evaluation. A faculty member visits your class during the semester and interviews students about their expectations and experiences, without the instructor present. Afterwards the course instructor and colleague meet to discuss the students' responses.

The TLC can also videotape your classes, or you may borrow our camera to do it yourself.

If you would like more information about either of these options, please see our web page <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/about/services.html>. Allow two weeks notice for mid-term evaluations.

## RESOURCES

The TLC has many resources available to the campus community, including books and journals promoting teaching excellence. The Teaching and Learning Center also maintains a vertical file and notebooks of teaching-related articles. Subjects include, but are not limited to:

- Active learning
- Assessment
- Collaborative learning
- Critical thinking
- Generating discussion
- Interdisciplinary teaching
- Syllabus construction
- Teaching portfolios
- Testing and grading
- Writing across disciplines

We are pleased to offer several excellent articles within the "Course Documents" section of the TLC Blackboard site <http://blackboard.wfu.edu/> that may enhance your classroom teaching experience. Contact the Coordinator at [tlc@wfu.edu](mailto:tlc@wfu.edu) to receive access

*For information about other TLC services and upcoming events, see the TLC web site. In addition, information about First-Year Seminars and FYS proposals is now available by going to the TLC homepage.*